South Florida Slash Pine

Pinus elliottii var. densa



South Florida Slash Pine
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 60 feet

Spread: 40 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Swamp Pine, Yellow Slash Pine, syn. Pinus densa

Description:

The canopy species of South Florida's pine rocklands, presenting a straight to contorted, cylindrical trunk and pyramidal crown that broadens with age; long, soft needles are dark sea-green; tolerant of adverse conditions; needs full sun

Ornamental Features

South Florida Slash Pine is primarily valued in the landscape for its ornamental upright and spreading habit of growth. It has bluish-green evergreen foliage. The needles remain bluish-green throughout the winter. The dark brown fruits are held in cones from early winter to late fall. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. The shaggy dark brown bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

South Florida Slash Pine is an evergreen tree with a strong central leader and an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep. When pruning is necessary, it is recommended to only trim back the new growth of the current season, other than to remove any dieback. It is a good choice for attracting birds and squirrels to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects
- Disease

South Florida Slash Pine is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

South Florida Slash Pine will grow to be about 60 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 40 feet. It has a high canopy of foliage that sits well above the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live to a ripe old age of 200 years or more; think of this as a heritage tree for future generations! This is a self-pollinating variety, so it doesn't require a second plant nearby to set fruit.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. This plant will benefit from an application of bonemeal and/or mycorrhizal fertilizer at the time of planting. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America.